

am I to do when they come by again? The monkeys outnumber me, and they can be a fierce lot.

(KAA enters. BALOO has an idea.)

BALOO. Ah, Kaa, old buddy. How was our bath, my good friend?

KAA (Missing as he speaks). When you talk like that, Baloo, I know you are seeking a big favor. Sss.

BALOO. Just a little one. You see, the monkey people—

KAA. I'll have nothing to do with the monkey people. Sss. (He starts to exit.)

BALOO. Wait till you hear what the problem is.

KAA. I'm clean and shiny from my bath. I'll do nothing to get dirty today. Sss.

BALOO (Following KAA as he is exiting). You won't get dirty. I promise. Now here's my idea, but you've got to help.

(They exit with BALOO still talking. A moment later the MONKEYS enter loudly, carrying MOWGLI who calls for help. They exit. BAGHEERA enters and collapses from exhaustion.)

BAGHEERA. I couldn't catch up to them.

(BALOO enters.)

BALOO. Bagheera, Kaa has offered to help us. He's lying in wait just beneath those logs.

BAGHEERA. How can a snake catch a bunch of wild monkeys?

BALOO. You'll see. But first we have to make sure they come by here again. You go that way, and I'll go this.

BAGHEERA. But I just went that way.

BALOO. Then I'll go that way, and you go this.

BAGHEERA. This way?

BALOO. No. That way.

BAGHEERA. Which way?

BALOO. Either way—just go!

BOTH (as they leave in opposite directions). Mowgli! Mowgli!

(They exit. A moment later SHERE KHAN and TABAGUI enter cautiously.)

Start

SHERE KHAN. The monkey people have foiled my plan. If the man-cub survives them, the bear and panther will never let him out of their sight again.

TABAGUI. Yes, but they can protect the boy only as long as he is a member of the wolf pack. If the wolves should ever reject him, he is ours.

SHERE KHAN. But why should they reject him after all these years?

TABAGUI. Because he is Akela's son. The pack needs a new leader. That could be you, Master.

SHERE KHAN. I am not a wolf.

TABAGUI. But you are strong and fierce. If no other wolf is qualified, any animal may be chosen as leader of the pack. That is a Law of the Jungle. We shall convince the young wolves that you alone should lead.

SHERE KHAN. You plot well, my scavenger friend. Round up the wolves. I shall meet them at the Council Rock.

(They exit in opposite directions. A moment later, the sound of the MONKEYS is heard approaching from the

End

Start

Baloo, Bagheera

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Act I

BAGHEERA. So that's what happened. I have to be more on guard. Especially if I'm teaching Mowgli how to protect himself.

BALOO. Speaking of Mowgli, have you seen him?

BAGHEERA. He's probably sleeping late again.

BALOO. Sleeping? He's worse than a teenager.

BAGHEERA. He is a teenager.

BALOO. That's right. Seems only yesterday he was a little cub.

BAGHEERA. You've taught him well, Baloo.

BALOO. And you've *protected* him well, Bagheera. Shere Khan does not come near him when you're around.

BAGHEERA. Yes, but I may not always be around. It's time for him to learn to protect himself.

BALOO. And it's past time for his daily lessons.

BAGHEERA. I'll go wake him with my paw.

BALOO. Be gentle with him, Bagheera.

BAGHEERA. I'll only tap him with my left paw. I use my *right* paw when I'm serious.

BALOO. And when do you use both paws?

BAGHEERA. When I meet the likes of Shere Khan. (*They laugh as BAGHEERA exits.*)

BALOO (*calling to offstage*). Wake up, little frog, or you'll have the fear o' Bagheera in you! (*To himself*). "The fear o' Bagheera—" I am a poet. Let's see if I can keep this going. (*Offstage trumpeting is heard.*)

Someone is coming very near.

Well, my goodness, look who's here.

(*HATHI, an elephant, enters.*)

BALOO. Well, if it isn't our largest inhabitant,
My friend, Hathi, the elephant.

End